

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURRENT TOPICS—COMPILLED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

Governor Seymour's Letter of Acceptance.

From the N. Y. Times. Governor Seymour at length accepts his nomination in a letter which has all the bad characteristics of his recent speeches. It is loose in its statements of fact, Jesuitical in its reasoning, and evasive in its treatment of the issues presented by the Democratic party.

The first impression produced by the letter is, that its writer realizes the odium incurred by the revolutionary programme of his party. This odium he seeks to break by charging upon his opponents purposes and tendencies which have no existence except in the minds of his friends. "The kings of business men are perplexed with uncertainties," as he remarks, but it is mainly because of the attitude assumed by the Democracy on the subjects of finance and reconstruction. In one case the public credit is threatened; in the other, the new order of things in the Southern States. The two causes are quite sufficient to explain and justify the uneasiness which pervades business circles; and there will be no escape from it until the party whose action excites it has been again rebuked by defeat. The continued advance in the price of gold, is an illustration of the effect produced by the Democratic platform upon the most sensitive indicator of commercial opinion; and the audacious preparations of the Southern leaders to overcome the authority of the new Governments by violence, exemplifies with equal point the encouragement received from the New York Convention.

When Mr. Seymour does venture to be specific in his accusations, it is at the expense of truth. For example, referring to Congress, he says:—

"It acts since the adjournment of the Convention show a clear change of political power will give to the people what they ought to have—a clear statement of what has been done with the money drawn from them during the past eight years."

The truth being that "clear statements" have been given by Mr. Blaine, in the House, and more recently by Mr. Wells in the press, which show not only "what has been done with the money," but that the stories put in circulation by Democratic orators, and by few more unwarrantably than by Mr. Seymour, are perversions coined for the basest uses. We are not unqualified eulogists of the financial management of the dominant party. We know that Congress and the Treasury are chargeable with many sins of omission and commission, of a fiscal and financial character. We know, too, that frauds have disgraced the administration of the Internal Revenue, the responsibility for which must be divided between the President and the Senate. But when Mr. Seymour alleges that there have been financial wrongs "which have been kept from the public knowledge," and for which Congress is accountable, he indulges a misstatement which partisan ardor does not excuse.

Again, Mr. Seymour writes:— "The Congressional party has not only allied itself with military power, but has brought to bear directly upon the elections in many States, but it also holds itself in perpetual session, with the avowed purpose of making such laws as it shall see fit, in view of the elections which will take place within a few weeks."

The answer to the allegation that the Congressional party intends to bring military power "to bear directly upon the elections" is, that under General Grant's orders, the District Commanders relinquished all the extraordinary authority conferred by the Reconstruction acts, so soon as the newly-formed Governments came into operation. The fact, then, is the opposite of Mr. Seymour's statement; and for this fact the Republican party is entitled to credit.

The intervention of the military may yet be necessary in Louisiana, and perhaps elsewhere, but it will be in consequence of the military organization which is at work to disfranchise the colored voters. If this necessity arise, some of the Southern adherents of Seymour and Blair may come to grief. The circumstance, if it happen, will not prove an improper alliance between the Republican party and the military. It will simply show that there are rebellious fools who have already forgotten the risks of rebellion, and need be reminded anew. Mr. Seymour must not suppose that his friends in South Carolina and Louisiana will be allowed to set law and local authority at defiance. Nor must he wonder if he and his party everywhere be held responsible for the revolutionary utterances and plans of the Southern Democracy.

Mr. Seymour's affected moderation takes another and more amusing shape. From untruthfulness it passes to hypocrisy. He patronizes the conservative Republicans, and substantially claims affiliation with them. Their errors, he thinks, have been of the judgment merely, and he bids them welcome to the Democracy. "They must now see," he suggests, "that the Republican party is in that condition that it cannot carry out a wise and peaceful policy." Therefore, goth he to the conservatives, come and help to elect the Democratic ticket!

The Governor does not choose to remember that conservatism in the Republican ranks ceased its murmuring and its opposition when Copperheadism proclaimed its continued mastery of the Democratic party. Such is the case, however. The conservative Republicans struggled a couple of years to moderate the course of the dominant party, but were uniformly frustrated by the unprincipled partisanship of the Democratic members. They contributed their full share to whatever is extreme in reconstruction legislation. And when they and their party raised the flag of resistance to law in Tammany Hall, incorporated Wade Hampton's doctrine in their platform, and otherwise afforded proof that Copperheadism is still in the ascendant in their councils, the last plea for conservatism, as a disintegrating element in the Republican ranks, vanished. The nomination of Grant at Chicago, on a platform at once conciliatory and just, laid the foundation for the reunion of all shades of Republican opinion. The New York nominations, on a platform of repudiation and revolution, removed all lingering doubts as to the course of duty, and rendered the Republican strength more compact than ever. Mr. Seymour therefore, may dismiss the hope of help from those whom he styles "the best men of the Republican party." They will not furnish him a corporal's guard.

The Threatened Rebellion.

From the N. Y. Tribune. The World recently devoted several leaders to proving the self-evident fact that the new State Governments in the South can be lawfully changed only through the regular action of their own Legislatures and legal voters. We did not suppose that the Rebels would agree to this, but we did count on the perseverance of the World. Yet that journal now prints an old speech of Frank Blair's, and says:—

"We must not be understood as printing this speech as an allusion to General Blair's more recent letter. There is nothing in that letter which we could wish him to retract or explain. His position is, that a Democratic President is elected, the negro reconstruction cannot stand. We are aware that the Republican Senate can offer a prolonged resistance to its overthrow; and we ourselves would have to have this obstacle fully weighed and appreciated before the Democratic Convention met. That obstacle is but temporary; for the Senate must ultimately be brought into harmony with the public sentiment of the country. But the repugnance of the Southern people to negro reconstruction is settled and insurmountable. In full view of the political complexion of the Senate and the long terms of the Senators, the Southern people decide that they will never voluntarily submit to a Democratic Congress. This inflexible opposition is as much a fact as the long terms of the Senators. The Senate can in no time be changed, but the intense repugnance of the Southern whites to be ruled by their former slaves is a permanent feature of the political situation. This unconquerable repugnance, which no states can daunt or opposition shake, renders it impossible ever to tranquilize the country and disband our extensive armies, until the States and the South are abolished. General Blair's letter is, in substance, a statement of that fact. It secured his nomination simply because it was the only one which denounces the Republican papers, all concede that it accurately reflects the public sentiment of the South. It is to be true that, notwithstanding the great obstacle interposed by the Republican Senate, the Southern whites will acquiesce in the new order of things, if, by the aid of the President, this fact must be faced as well as the fact that the Senate is, for the present, Republican."

representatives." The existing State governments are to be overthrown precisely as Bonaparte overthrew the pre-existing republican government of France in 1800, or as Louis Napoleon overthrew that under which he was first chosen President. The representatives thus chosen by a part of the people of the South, in defiance of their State Constitutions, are to be admitted to seats by the Democrats from the North; and then this "National House," with the cooperation of the President, is to "compel" the Senate to acquiesce in the accomplished revolution. The World, therefore, substitutes a programme of its own for that of its man Blair, and tries to pass off the former for the latter. It won't do!

V. But, "if there should be a deviation from the usual forms," whereby "the negro governments should suddenly collapse," we are told that "it will be because the Senate and the negroes refuse to comply with the will of the President, and the result will be what is stated." Let us know if a vote for Seymour is to be counted as a vote for the Blair programme of subversion and revolution? Is a vote for Seymour in New York a vote to disfranchise the blacks of the Carolinas? Let us understand!

The Key-note of the Campaign.

From the N. Y. World.

It is easy to see, from the whole texture of Governor Seymour's noble letter of acceptance, that he expects to be elected, and he writes accordingly. He looks upon the responsibility which befalls such an expectation. He is already a selected and recognized leader of one of the great political parties; and in this his last public utterance before the election, he seeks to mould the public sentiment of the party into conformity with the course he will think it his duty to pursue as President. The confidence which the party feels in his sagacity and statesmanship, binds it to conduct the campaign in accordance with the views which its candidate has so ably and so deliberately put forth.

While Governor Seymour takes no pains to conceal the hostility and scorn with which he regards the bastard State governments and the injustice and absurdity of admitting their bogus Senators, he speaks of the honest masses of the Republican party with a candor and consideration which foreshadow the healing moderation with which he will administer the government. He gives prominence to the fact that many of the wisest leaders of the Republican party have disapproved and protested against the violent counsels which have prevailed in Congress; counsels which he attributes to the fact that the party has been free from the wholesome restraint of a powerful opposition. In the long course into which it has been hurried, and its most impetuous and passionate men, have resulted from the inevitable tendency of all unchecked power to abuse; and Governor Seymour evidently expects that, after a great Democratic victory, the wiser and more moderate portion of the Republican leaders, whose influence has been overborne, will recover the ascendancy due to their talents, and that there will afterwards be no difficulty in tranquilizing the country on the solid basis of justice, moderation, and good sense. One of the best fruits which Governor Seymour seems to expect from a Democratic triumph, is the simultaneous change it will cause in the leadership of the Republican party, by dwarfing the influence of the reckless and domineering spirits who now hold the reins and crack the whip. It is by such a change, and not by superstitious violence, that Governor Seymour expects a satisfactory settlement of the prevailing difficulties.

We ask attention to the following pregnant sentences:—"The Republican party, as well as we, are interested in putting some check upon this violence. It must be clear to every thinking mind that the violence of party tends to check the peace and good order of society. The election of a Democratic Executive and a majority of Democratic Senators and Representatives would not give to that party organization the power to make sudden or violent changes, but it would serve to check those extreme measures of violence which have been the best men of both political organizations. The result would most certainly lead to that which the Republican party desires, and which the Democratic party deprecates as deeply as I do. It is the spirit of violence shown by the recently admitted seats in Congress from the South. The condition of civil war which they contemplate must be abortive to every right-thinking man."

"I have no mere personal wishes which mislead my judgment in regard to the pending election. The President's office is not merely a sinecure, but it is a trust which is not to be entrusted to the care of him who is not to be trusted with the duties of the office of President of the United States can fall to be impressed with the cares and toils of him who is to meet its demands. It is not merely to float with popular currents without a policy or a purpose. On the contrary, while our Constitution gives just rights to the majority, it also distinguishes a feature is that it seeks to protect the rights of minorities. It greatest glory is that it puts restraints upon power. It gives force and form to the sense of justice shown by the majority for which the martyrs of freedom have struggled through ages. It declares the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, and possessions, and to be free from searches and seizures. That Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people to petition for redress of grievances. It secures the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury."

"No man can rightfully enter upon the duties of the President's office unless he is not only willing to carry out the wishes of the people expressed in a Constitutional way, but is also prepared to stand up for the rights of minorities. He must denounce measures which would wrong personal or home rights, or religious conscience of the humblest citizen of the land. He must maintain without distinction of creed or nationality, all the privileges of American citizenship."

From these excellent paragraphs, taken in connection with the whole tenor of the letter, we get a very clear notion of the method by which Governor Seymour expects to bring back the rights of the people, and to get General Grant's servile doctrine that the President is to be the passive tool of a majority. He recognizes and accepts the fact that his administration will be confronted by an opposition Senate, and thinks that honest, peace-loving Republicans should see in that fact a sure guarantee against any violent stretches of authority by the new administration. It is not by subverting or circumventing the Senate that Mr. Seymour expects, as President, to carry his measures, but by the ascendancy, in that body, of his wisest and coolest heads, whose influence has been stifled by the arrogance of reckless leaders, because the party of the South has been free from the salutary check of an efficient opposition. When the Republican party finds itself in a minority, it will consent to be led by its statesmen, and no longer by its demagogues and fanatics. After the election of a Democratic President and House of Representatives, all wise Republicans will see that the revolutionary measures of their party cannot be permanent, and that the party would lose infinitely more than it could gain by standing out against a tranquilizing settlement. The universal demand of the people will be for a prompt and equitable settlement, and the Senate, when the new administration, will prevent the Government from swinging from one extreme to its opposite, according to the natural tendency of reaction. The election of Mr. Seymour will restore at once a system of effective checks and balances, and insure the movement of the

Blair's Letter to Broadhead.

"There is but one way to restore the Government and the Constitution, and that is for the President elect to declare a 'cessation' of Reconstruction acts null and void, and to compel the army to undo its usurpations at the South, disperse the carpet-bag State governments, allow the white people to reorganize their own governments, and elect Senators and Representatives. The House of Representatives will contain a majority of Democrats from the North, and they will admit the Representatives elected by the white people of the South; and, with the cooperation of the President, it will not be difficult to compel the Senate to submit once more to the obligations of the Constitution. I repeat that this is the real and only question that should be allowed to control us."

Government in that steady middle course which is best fitted to satisfy all interests. That the Senate will easily be brought to reason, after the election of a Democratic President, is inferred from the fact, so strongly put by Governor Seymour, that the wild and high-handed measures of Congress have been adopted against the judgment of many of the most sagacious men of the Republican party. These Republican journals which have been demanding proofs of Governor Seymour's statesmanship may find them in this letter. It contains not a trace of that threatening, spasmodic violence of tone which marks busy, consequential insignificance. He has a steady grasp of the situation, and a calm foresight both of obstacles and the means of surmounting them. He speaks like a man conscious of resources, who sees no necessity for violence, because he feels capable of putting things in such a light that candid opponents in the Senate will not refuse his co-operation. The moderation, the self-possession, the calmness, the confidence of a statesman, speak in every line of the letter. He has so clear a perception of the great moral effect of a Democratic victory, that he feels no anxiety lest a hostile Senate should prevent the country from reaping its fruits. What we look to is an adjustment in which all branches of the Government and all sections of the country will participate and concur. All will see the necessity of having this great quarrel settled at last, and the impossibility of settling it except on a basis of substantial justice. He looks upon the Senate less as an obstacle to his policy than as a substantial force in its moderation. He expects to lift these irritating questions out of the heated atmosphere of party and sectional passions, and to settle them, by general acquiescence, on such a basis that they will never be reopened. He treats honest Republicans with consideration now, because he expects their co-operation hereafter. He will be President, when elected, of the whole American people; and he expects to knit them all together in the bonds of a renewed brotherhood.

Current of Political Sentiment and the Presidential Election in the South.

From the N. Y. Herald.

An extraordinary and quite unexpected revolution is taking place in the political prospects of parties in the South. The radical leaders spread themselves over the Southern States, after reconstructing those States on the negro basis, to secure the votes of the new-born citizens of African descent. The first orators in Congress, both Senators and Representatives, left their seats and homes to stomp the South and to control the negro vote. A vast exodus of radical carpet-baggers left the North, and principally the Eastern States, spreading themselves over the whole South like locusts to secure the suffrages of the blacks, as well as the offices and the property of the whites. In fact, the Northern radicals had it pretty much all their own way. The South was their political elysium. They had no doubt about controlling the votes of the negroes, not only for their own elevation, but in the Presidential election also. All the trouble between Congress and the President arose from the struggle to gain the negro vote as a balance of political power, and the reconstruction acts of Congress were framed expressly for this purpose. In truth, nothing was less undone that could be done by all the means that an all-powerful party could use, and scarcely a radical in or out of Congress had any doubt of the result.

But what do we see now? Precisely what the Herald said long ago and all through would be the case—that in the end the negroes would go with their masters and the Democrats. From every quarter of the Southern States the fact comes to us that this is the case. A most thorough reaction is taking place. The press and almost all the correspondence from the South show the South private and most reliable correspondence inform us that "every one of the ex-Rebel States will be carried by the Democrats; that the negroes are leaving the radical party by hundreds; that they are organizing colored conservative clubs, and that they are attending Democratic barbecues by thousands." Never was there a more striking example of the old saying that the best laid plans may be defeated.

And why are the negroes abandoning the radicals and going with their old masters and the Democrats? Because they believe their interests lie that way, and because the Southern whites know how to treat and control them better than the Northerners. In their brief experience with Northern adventurers—properly called carpet-baggers, because the greater part of them were needy speculators, without any property but the carpet-bags they carried in their hands—the negroes have seen that these men had really no sympathy with them, and only wanted to use them for their own selfish purposes. They see that their best friends are their old masters, and the white people among whom they were born and bred. Because they believe their interests lie that way, and because the Southern whites know how to treat and control them better than the Northerners. 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